



TMA 02

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TMA 02

Word limit: 1,200 words

When you have completed this assignment, submit it via the eTMA system to arrive no later than midday on **13 December 2018**.

In no more than 1,200 words, write your answer to the following question:

What can historians learn from this document (Extract from online session 8.2: Jean de Coras, *Arrest Memorable du Parlement de Tolose*) about how early modern life in general and Martin Guerre's life in particular would have served to facilitate this impersonation?

After these eight years a person presented himself to her [Bertrande de Rols] who is truly Arnault du Tilh, called Pansette, from Sagias, who called himself at all times Martin Guerre, and husband of the supplicant [Bertrande]. And the said du Tilh, as is likely, being comrade in arms of the said Martin Guerre, heard from him (under pretext of friendship) several private and personal things about him and his wife. The said du Tilh, confident that he carried with him completely the features and general appearance of the said Martin, violated in the first place all laws of friendship, and then employed a new kind of effrontery and trickery: he presented himself to the four sisters, the uncle and relatives to the said Martin, and to the said Bertrande de Rols, and even to all those from Artigat and gave to all several particulars and such close proofs that not only strangers, but the said relatives, and even the supplicant were persuaded that he was truly Martin Guerre. So it should not be suprising that the supplicant was incredibly eager to see and recover her husband. And the said du Tilh had given her several private and personal proofs. Even acts of conversation which occur most secretly between married couples, and which others could not honestly know or hear; even to the point of showing her the places, the time and the hour of the secret acts of marriage. (Much easier to understand than it is proper to speak of or write.) And the conversations which they had before, after, and during the act. So that she was persuaded with the others that the said du Tilh was certainly Martin Guerre, her husband. This done, the said du Tilh first took possession of the person of the supplicant, treating her familiarly in all ways during the span of three years, as if she were his wife, and then took possession of all the property of the said Martin, not only in Artigat but also other property which the said Martin had in Hendaye in the country of the Basques of which he was native. Which property du Tilh then sold to several and various persons. In this error the said de Rols, supplicant, was lulled and kept for three years and more. During these years they lived truly married people, eating, drinking and sleeping as is customary. And from this cohabitation were born two children, one of whom died.

Source: de Coras, J. (1982 [1572]) *Arrest Memorable* (trans. J.K. Ringold and J. Lewis), *Triquarterly*, vol. 55, pp. 86–7.

Guidance notes

TMA 02 is designed to assess your understanding of the evidence historians use to write about the period. It will assess your ability to evaluate and analyse a primary source in a

critical manner, demonstrating your knowledge of the material presented in the document, but also setting it into its historical context and thinking about how the information could be of use to historians.

The word count is tight, so you will need to be concise, but make sure to:

- comment on the nature, origin, context and significance of the source
- use examples from the source to answer the question.

Before you start writing your answer, look carefully at the advice on analysing documents given in the A223 Assessment guide.

In order to answer this TMA, you need to identify the author and give some background on the document. The bulk of your answer should be taken up with your analysis of its content, in answer to the question. Don't just summarise the content: focus on what the source tells us about early modern life in general and Martin Guerre's in particular which facilitated the impersonation. To what extent do you think that this case might have been unusual? Material from Chapter 8 'A sense of self: individualism' will help you do that.

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